WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for simulating film grain in an input image block, comprising the steps of:

(a) computing an average value of at least one image parameter for the block;

(b) selecting a film grain block from at least one previously established pool of film grain blocks whose image parameter most closely matches the image parameter of the input image block;

(c) blending the selected film grain block with the input image block.

2. The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of de-blocking the selected film grain block prior to blending with the input image block.

3. The method according to claim 1 wherein the previously established film grain blocks are organized in the at least one pool based on image intensity.

4. The method according to claim 1 further including the step of updating the at least one pool in accordance with characteristics of the input image.

5. The method according to claim 3 where a different film grain block is selected for at least one of a different color component.

6. The method according to claim 1 further including the step of transforming the selected block prior to the blending step.

7. The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of selecting a film grain block from among a plurality of pools of film grain blocks.

8. A method for simulating film grain in an input image from which the film grain has at least been attenuated and been decomposed in into input image blocks, comprising the steps of:

(a) selecting a successive one of a set of input image blocks;

(b) computing an average value of at least one image parameter for the successive block;

(c) selecting, from among at least one pool of previously established film grain blocks, a film grain block having image parameter most closely matches the average value of the at least one image parameter of the successive block;

(d) repeating steps (a)-(c) for all the pixel blocks in the image; and

(e) blending the selected film grain blocks to yield an output image with film grain.

9. The method according to claim 8 wherein the previously established film grain blocks are organized in the at least one pool based on image intensity.

10. The method according to claim 8 further including the step of updating the at least one pool of pre-established film grain blocks in accordance with characteristics of the input image.

11. The method according to claim 8 where a different film grain block is selected for at least one of a different color component.

12. The method according to claim 7 further including the step of transforming the selected block prior to repeating steps (c) - (d).

13. The method according to claim 8 further comprising the step of selecting a film grain block from among a plurality of pools of film grain blocks.

14. The method according to claim 8 further comprising the step of de-blocking the successive film grain block prior to repeating steps (c) - (d).